



3 1761 01140624 6

Sakuma, Seiichi

The duty of Japan to-
wards Asia in her self-
interest

DS
849
C5S29



For Private Circulation

THE DUTY OF JAPAN
TOWARDS ASIA
IN HER SELF-INTEREST

By
SEIICHI SAKUMA

MATSUSHITA PRESS
TOKIO
1916

For Private Circulation

THE DUTY OF JAPAN
TOWARDS ASIA
IN HER SELF-INTEREST

DS
849

529122 C5

WATKINS & WATKINS
LONDON
1901

THE DUTY OF JAPAN TOWARDS ASIA IN HER SELF-INTEREST

I HAVE been often asked to say something about the mistaken policy of the present administration, but I have refrained from doing so, thinking—let those who are entrusted with the work do their duty and they will find out the right way—but when, to my mortification, I find, by their mistakes, that they are slowly drifting the country to dangerous shoals—I feel it my prerogative to protest, or I fail in my patriotic duty. I question not their sincerity and patriotism. Individuals may make mistakes; that counts not much; but the ministers at the helm of the State have no right to err in their judgment. They are criminally guilty if they are not conscious of their serious responsibility and act light-heartedly in matters which will affect generations yet unborn. That can not be forgiven or forgivable. Statesmen must have constructive policies and not play opportunism in the game of the day. They must not only work for the present, but also with eyes for the future. The service and glory of the country is the only religion they should know, and observe no other law. There is nothing more sacred and sanctified than to see the country glorified by their acts.

But what do we find? Our foreign policy is without any head or heart. It lacks the direction of a strong principle, worthy of the Land of the Shamori.

In China we have been committing blunder after blunder. We forget the destiny of Asiatic Nations is interwoven and the strength of the one is the strength of the other. Asiatic Nations will rise and fall together and we can not for long

stand alone, isolated. Here is idealism and self-interest combined. Yet we are defying them both. A strong China would be a bulwark of Japanese strength and the goodwill of the Celestial Empire would introduce our merchandise into the marts of her teeming millions. Yet we are antagonizing her in every way. That Japan should stand in the way of the progress of the Middle Kingdom is not only a stupid policy, but a suicidal crime. I would be the last to object to the aspirations of Nippon to the leadership of Asiatic politics and destiny, but she has followed the wrong way. The door lay open for us, but our short-sighted Statesmen blocked it up stupidly. The present European war gave us the golden opportunity to liberate the whole of Asia from European domination and thereby assert our leadership in commerce and influence. But where Turkey, *the sick man of Europe*, has succeeded in getting rejuvenated, *the strong man of Asia* has failed. We are not only dumb and mute to the cries of India, but we quell the Hindu insurrection at Singapore by our marines and hand over the Hindu Patriots at home to their enemies at the dictates of others. We want the mastery of the Pacific, yet when England is in her death-grapple—we do not wrest it from her. We need to extend our commerce and political influence, yet when Holland is between the devil and the deep sea, we do not take the key of the Pacific from her, and allow thirty millions of Javanese to be pillaged by her greed. We acknowledge the validity of the Monroe Doctrine that America is for the Americans of the Caucasian blood—yet we allow the Americans to get a strong foothold in the Pacific. We want the equal rights of the first nations of the world—yet our citizens are not allowed on American soil, while they can roam all over, as Lords of the Planet. Claims of superiority they have none, as they assert, either spiritual, moral or intellectual. Any other nation would have done much better with their vast natural resources and fertile virgin soil. We drove the Germans, with the help of the English, from China, yet we could, with the help of Germany, drive away both England

and Russia from the Asiatic Hemisphere. As to America and Holland, from a military point of view, they do not count much, and the Philippines and Java can be easily brought into the sphere of our influence. We have failed, from lack of statesmanship, where we ought to have succeeded. There was nothing in our way. Europe was too busy fighting among themselves and we could assert the Monroe Doctrine of Asia without much bloodshed. Asia under the leadership of Japan could fight against the rest of the world combined, if necessary. That would have liberated mankind from race prejudice and antagonism—and the brotherhood of man would have been a reality instead of a dream. There is no excuse for our failure. That there was a treaty with England did not bind us to sacrifice our Duty and Vital Interests. The treaty was good as long as it served our purpose, and England contracted it with us, not because she loved us,—rather she would crush Nippon if she could, but she made a virtue out of necessity, as it was in her interest. As soon as it ceased to be of mutual benefit, it lost all its ethical value and nothing is so good for a statesman as success, and success was within our grasp. Moreover, England and Russia are our natural enemies. We have to fight them, if we are to be supreme in Asiatic politics. It has to come. It will be an imperative necessity. Economic conditions and geographic situation will demand it. And I would not be surprised if Japan will soon be compelled to solicit a treaty with Germany to drive away the rest of the European Powers from Asia. If not for anything else, it will be a necessity for self-preservation. Then Nippon will curse her statesmen of to-day. It is really too preposterous to imagine that our Cabinet Ministers really believed what the British press agents told them, that the war would be short-lived and Germany could be easily vanquished. Yet it is a fact, and they arranged their foreign relations accordingly. The strange thing is, what appeared so simple to others remained a complicated problem to those so-called astute men in charge of the State. In the academic circles,

Germany's economic power of resistance was well known. In the military journals it was freely discussed that Germany could not be beaten in arms. She could always bargain to her advantage. The port of Antwerp was more to her than all the colonies she has lost. She holds practically all of Poland, Servia, Belgium and the richest and most industrious part of France. To drive her out of these fortified positions is beyond the military resources of the Allies. And, in the long run, it would defeat its very object, even if they could accomplish it. No patriot of Belgium would like to see the Allies be victorious on her soil and her best cities in ruins—Antwerp, Brussels, Ghent—and their industries destroyed and the country in devastation. For the Germans would erect barricades against every wall and fight like old Shamories, and for every inch of ground fearful bloodshed would be necessary, and if the Allies could retake possession of their lost territories, victory would be equal to defeat, if not worse. If diplomacy is not equal to the task, war would not decide the question, for the loss of men and money would be incalculable. Even the entrance of Roumania into the arena of the war would not change the situation. It will simply prolong the war and consolidate the Teutonic and the Ottoman Alliance, and all the momentum would be brought forward to crush Roumania into submission. The Danube will be the new water highway for the expansion of the Teutonic trade, making Vienna and Buda-Pesth open ports, connecting with the Black Sea. Moreover, it will strengthen the Ottoman Empire and infuse a new rebellious strength into the Mohamedan world. If peace were concluded to-morrow by drawn war or economic exhaustion, another second war would ere long be the inevitable consequence to readjust the trade differences between England and Germany. England has been controlling the marts of the Orient, and Germany aspires to it. In the next war England will have to fight all alone; England knows it well; that is why this war is being prolonged, and if Germany can be beaten it is the best chance now with the help of Russia

and France. In the next war, who knows? Germany, well organized and with the sympathy of the Mohamedan world and rebellious Hindustan, England may be made to pay dearly for trying to crush such a formidable and resourceful foe, and her imperial power robbed and shorn of power.

Japan should understand this clearly and do her duty where her self-interest lies. The British Empire is in the process of disintegration. Its collapse is sure to come either in this war or in the next inevitable one. There should be no disillusionment when the day comes. Japan should be prepared. It is not yet too late if this will awaken her to her duties and responsibilities. Will Japan consolidate the Asiatic Nationalities and lead them to power, progress and prosperity, or imperil her own position? Japan is loved by none, but hated by all American and European Powers. If her Rise, Power and Progress have been a source of pleasure and inspiration to any, these are to the Asiatic Nationalities. They will stand by us if we stand by them in their hour of trial. In the Russo-Japanese war, they prayed for our victory and our victorious guns echoed, re-echoed and reverberated all over Asia, filling their hearts with thrills, hopes and expectations. Now they invoke our aid to liberate them from the European yoke, when these European powers are cutting each other's throat. Shall we do our Duty, where our Self-Interest lies, before they can recuperate, or bury our national honor, power and prestige in curses, shame and disgrace? Is it already too late to expect our Leaders will be equal to the task? SHALL WE DO OUR DUTY TOWARDS ASIA AND RISE IN POWER AND PRESTIGE? THIS IS THE PATH OF OUR HONOR, GLORY AND SUCCESS.

—*Reproduced and translated from a speech delivered at Kojimoehi, September 3, 1916.*



DS

849

C5S29

Sakuma, Seiichi

The duty of Japan towards
Asia in her self-interest

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

